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The role of men in nontraditional roles: Male sorority advisors

Brian Thomas Clarke

Eastern Illinois University

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The Role of Men in Nontraditional Roles: Male Sorority Advisors
(TITLE)

BY

Brian Thomas Clarke

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF

Master of Science in College Student Affairs

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

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ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis The Role of Men in Nontraditional Roles: Male
Sorority Advisors

Brian T. Clarke, Master of Science in College
Student Affairs

Directed by: James A. Wallace, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Counseling and Student
Development

The researcher's experience as a male sorority advisor served as the impetus for the present study, specifically relating to the struggles and difficulties experienced by male chapter advisors in gaining respect, trust, and acceptance from undergraduate and alumnae sorority members.

The purpose of the study was to explore the phenomenon of men as sorority advisors of historically white sororities. Naturalistic methodology (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001) was used to collect the data for the present study. All data were collected through one-on-one qualitative interviews. Participants in the current study were males who have and/or currently serve in an advisory role for sororities which includes, but is not limited to, chapter and academic advisors. Males who professionally work as advisors to college and university Panhellenic councils were part of the target population for the study. A total of eight participants were used for the study.

Data analysis produced the following findings:

- 1) The participants proactively became male sorority advisors due to a need by the organization, a personal relationship, and the desire to have sorority advising experience.

- 2) The participants found their experience with sororities to be very satisfying and rewarding, especially when they were able to develop deeper relationships with the members and support them on an individual level.
- 3) The participants found the personalities of women to be different than those of men, thus making their experience challenging and occasionally difficult to communicate and connect with the members.
- 4) The reaction of peers to male sorority advisors consisted of surprise, confusion, and stereotypes.
- 5) The sorority members and chapters were receptive and welcoming to male sorority advisors.
- 6) The male participants received both support and resistance from female National Panhellenic Conference leaders, headquarters staff members, and chapter advisors.
- 7) The participants maintained both a personal and physical distance from the members.
- 8) The participants learned the most about being a male sorority advisor from reaching out and learning from other fraternity and sorority volunteers and professionals.
- 9) Compared to fraternity members, sorority members were more likely to do a better job at thanking the participants for their involvement and help.

The conclusions from the study were that, first, male sorority advisors were very satisfied with their experiences and enjoyed working with the sorority members and being a part of their lives. Some found working with the sorority women to be more enjoyable than working with fraternity men. Second, the male sorority advisors faced some obstacles or barriers from either another a chapter advisor, alumnae member, headquarters staff member, or NPC advisor. Men who became male sorority advisors expected some type of resistance from one of the four groups of sorority women. Third, the ability to communicate with the members was complicated due to differences in modal communication patterns between men and women.

Suggestions for future researchers on male sorority advisors are:

- 1) Select participants who represent a wide range of experiences as a sorority advisor. Characteristics to consider include number of years involved as an advisor, size of the chapter, geographic location of the school, the cultural make up of the chapter, and the national sorority affiliation.
- 2) Include the experiences of undergraduate sorority members, chapter advisors, international and national headquarters staff members, and NPC area advisors with male sorority advisors. Their experiences may confirm the experiences of male sorority advisors and better identify some of the obstacles and challenges male sorority advisors face from sorority women.
- 3) Conduct a simultaneous longitudinal study of the experiences of a group of new male sorority advisors. Find participants who would be willing to proactively become a male sorority advisor. Have the study take place at different size institutions and geographical regions. A variety of NPC

sororities and chapters with varying advisor needs should be selected. The participants should be of different ages, Greek life advising experience, and marital status

- 4) Conduct a more in-depth study of the characteristic and prior life experiences of men that lead them to become male sorority advisors.
- 5) Explore how dealing with body image issues amongst sorority members affects male sorority advisors.
- 6) Compare male sorority advisors of different sexual orientations to find out if and how their relationship with sorority members and acceptance from peers and colleagues differ one another.
- 7) Examine the backgrounds of the male sorority advisors to explore the reasons for the different level of descriptiveness in their responses to the protocol questions.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandpa, Charles Just Clarke, who passed away on February 5, 2007. My grandpa always supported me in all that I did and I loved him so much. I know how proud he would have been to see me complete my thesis and graduate with my master's degree. I will miss him so much.

"Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!"

From the Book of St. Matthew 25:23

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	ix
CHAPTER	
I INTRODUCTION	1
Purpose of the Study	2
Research Questions.....	3
Significance of the Study	3
Limitations of the Study.....	4
Definition of Terms.....	4
Summary	6
II REVIEW OF LITERATURE	7
Men and Sororities	7
Nontraditional Career Choices.....	8
Stereotypes.....	11
Sex Role Identity.....	12
Intercollegiate Athletics	14
Summary	16
III METHODOLOGY	17
Design of the Study.....	17
Participants.....	19
Instruments.....	21
Data Collection	21
Treatment of the Data	22
Summary	23
IV RESULTS/FINDINGS	24
Male Chapter Advisors	24
Males who Advise Panhellenic Councils.....	25
Analysis of the Findings	26
Research Question 1	28
Research Question 2	33
Research Question 3	39
Research Question 4	44
Research Question 5	50

	Summary of Findings.....	54
V	DISCUSSION	55
	Future Researchers	61
	Student Affairs Practitioners.....	63
	Conclusions.....	64
	REFERENCES	66
	APPENDICES	70
	A: Department Thesis Approval	70
	B: IRB Consent Form	72
	C: Participation Consent Form.....	74
	D: Interview Protocol Questions.....	78
	E: Demographic Survey	80
	F: Letter of Introduction.....	82
	G: National Panhellenic Council Letter	84
	H: Association of Fraternity Advisors Letter.....	86
	I: Association of Fraternity Advisors Online Community Posting.....	88
	RESUME	90

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Phi Beta Kappa was founded in 1776 at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia and is recognized as the first Greek letter society founded in the United States (The Phi Beta Kappa Society, n.d., ¶ 1-2). In 1851 at the Wesleyan Female College, Alpha Delta Pi became the first sorority founded in the United States (Alpha Delta Pi Sorority, 2004, ¶ 2). Two hundred and thirty years later after 1776, fraternities and sororities are represented on more than 800 college and university campuses in the United States and Canada (North American Interfraternity Conference, 2006). The fraternities and sororities represented on these campuses belong to one of four national governing bodies, the North American Interfraternity Conference (NIC), National Panhellenic Conference (NPC), National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC), and the National Association of Latino Fraternal Organizations (NALFO).

The national organizational structure of fraternities and sororities consists of volunteers and paid staff members. Paid staff members run the daily operations of the organization. Volunteers serve in a variety of positions, including board of directors, regional volunteers who manage and support other volunteers in a geographic region, and local volunteers who serve as advisors to a chapter on a college or university campus. Chapter advisors at the institutional level are key components to the success of chapters at the local, regional and national levels. They are the institutional memory and the one constant of a chapter. As undergraduates graduate and move away, it is the advisor that returns for the next school year.

At all levels, fraternities and sororities have an expectation that at least one advisor be in place at a chapter. Chapter advisors are most commonly members of the organization, in some circumstances the chapter advisor will be a member of another fraternity or sorority, but usually the same gender as members of the organization. Parents, university faculty and staff, and members of the opposite gender occasionally volunteer to serve in an advisory role for a fraternity or sorority. Historically, it is more common and socially acceptable for women to volunteer as an advisor to a fraternity. It is rare that men serve in an advisory role to a sorority. Men who become sorority advisors may experience difficulties working with a chapter to gain acceptance. Those difficulties may include acceptance from undergraduate sorority members and sorority alumnae advisors due to the fact that they are not and cannot be members of the national organization. The present research will focus on the experiences of men who serve as advisors to historically white sororities; specifically sororities affiliated with the NPC.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to explore the phenomenon of men as sorority advisors of historically white sororities. Prior research provided a limited analysis of the experiences of male sorority advisors, including the reasons for their involvement and their unique experiences working with an all female organization. In addition, the present study of male sorority advisors contributes to the current literature on men in nontraditional roles in female dominated occupations. A secondary purpose of the study was to provide a template for the development of male sorority advisors. The template addresses how to become a sorority advisor, working with a sorority chapter, and overcoming the barriers associated with being a male in a female dominated position.

The template may serve to benefit the male sorority advisor as well as female alumnae members who work and volunteer as sorority advisors.

Research Questions

Five research questions guided the present study and reflected several personal experiences of the researcher as a male sorority advisor:

- 1) Why do males become sorority advisors?
- 2) What are the feelings associated with the role of a male advisor to a sorority?
- 3) How do male sorority advisors deal with issues of sexual attraction/conflict, gender differences, and their desire to be accepted as a sorority advisor?
- 4) How do the age and gender of male sorority advisors affect their ability to be taken seriously by students, alumnae and headquarters staff members?
- 5) How do male sorority advisors manage personally sensitive and ethical issues?

Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study is that the phenomenon and experiences of the male sorority advisor may possibly be recorded for the first time. If this is indeed the first study of its kind, the study will contribute new and original research to the field of fraternity and sorority life. The findings may have an effect on fraternity and sorority chapter advisors at the university level and sorority professionals and volunteers at the regional and national levels. It is hoped that the findings will provide clarity for female advisors in their efforts to provide guidance and direction to men on how to better work with sorority women. Volunteers, headquarters staff members, and boards of directors will be able to use the findings of the present research to become more aware of the

issues male sorority advisors face in their efforts to create a community that is more welcoming to and inclusive of them. Males who aspire to become sorority advisors will be able to use the results of the present study to better understand how to overcome potential barriers and connect better with the undergraduate sorority members, other sorority advisors, and regional volunteers.

Limitations of the Study

The total population of male sorority advisors is unknown and thus a limitation to the present study. The phenomenon of the male sorority advisor is rarely found on a college or university campus. So, it was difficult to identify a large group of male sorority advisors to participate as most have not previously been identified. The researcher, utilizing purposive sampling questioning, relied on participants' knowing other male sorority advisors to identify additional members of the target population. The distance of the participants from the researcher posed a limitation. The researcher relied on advanced telecommunication technology to conduct most of the interviews, incurring the cost of long distance phone calls. The pool of male sorority advisors was drawn from across the nation and time to connect with many of them was limited. The researcher relied on the availability of the participants to establish a day and time for an interview that worked best for both the researcher and the participant.

Definition of Terms

1. AFA – Association of Fraternity Advisors, the professional association of fraternity and sorority professionals (Association of Fraternity Advisors, 2005).
2. Chapter: The campus group of a national organization.

3. Chapter Advisor: An alumnus/alumna who establishes and maintains a close advisory relationship with a chapter and serves as a teacher, counselor, and friend. Most often this individual is female.
4. Greek Life Professional: A paid university employee in charge of advising the fraternities and sororities at the institution.
5. National Panhellenic Conference (NPC): A group composed of delegates from each of 26 national women's fraternities who meet periodically to discuss and rule on issues of common interest and concern.
6. Panhellenic Council: The governing body of all sororities on a campus which are chapters of any of the 26 National Panhellenic organizations (Virginia Tech University Fraternity and Sorority Life, 2006).
7. Sorority: A group of women joined together in friendship for leadership and academic purposes (Duke University Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life, n.d.).

Summary

Since the creation of the first fraternity in 1776, the male sorority advisor continues to be a rare phenomenon among NPC member organizations. Men that serve as sorority advisors face issues of acceptance from members of the organization and the wider sorority community, and are questioned as to the validity of their reason to serve as an advisor. Exploring the reasoning why men become sorority advisors will help provide answers to the variety of challenges that men face when relating to members of their respective organizations at the local (college/university), regional, and national levels.

The following chapters will provide an extensive description of the research. Chapter II highlights and describes previous research as it relates to male sorority advisors. Chapter III describes the methodology used for the present study. The methodology includes the design of the study, participants, and collection and treatment of the data. Chapter IV describes the common themes that emerged from an analysis of participant responses to interview protocol questions. Chapter V discusses the conclusions and findings for the study and recommendations for future researchers.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Men and Sororities

There is at least one known instance where a man was influential in the development and expansion of a NPC sorority. In 1878, George Banta, a member of Phi Delta Theta, was given membership into Delta Gamma (Delta Gamma Fraternity, 2005) and expanded the women's fraternity into the states north of Mississippi. Banta established his first Delta Gamma Chapter at Franklin College in Indiana and actively continued his involvement with the sorority until his death in 1935.

Alpha Chi Omega was also founded due to the influence of a male. In 1855, James Hamilton, a Professor and Dean of the Music School at DePauw University, invited seven women to attend a meeting to form a society (Alpha Chi Omega, 2007). Those seven became the original founders of Alpha Chi Omega. Chi Omega, another NPC sorority, lists a male, Dr. Charles Richardson as one of their five founders and an author of the sorority's constitution (Chi Omega Fraternity, 2007). Founders are not necessarily organizational members.

The NPC currently has policies that prohibit men from some sorority activities. In the 14th edition of the Manual of Information, UNANIMOUS AGREEMENTS are resolutions that all 26 NPC member groups have voted to pass to ensure equity (National Panhellenic Conference, 2005). One UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT currently discriminates against men: "Each College Panhellenic Association shall prohibit the participation of men in membership recruitment and Bid Day Activities" (p. MR-28).

Sullivan, Jelke, and Bureau (2002) presented information about female communication, stereotypes and assumptions regarding male sorority advisors, obstacles for male advisors, and strategies for male advisors and sororities to work together. These male Greek Life Professionals suggested that women valued relationships and intimacy, avoided female confrontation, and focused on sharing. Stereotypes and assumptions about males as sorority advisors included lack of understanding about the sorority and sorority bonding, the possibility of dating women within the group, and taking the advising job specifically to meet sorority women. Obstacles to males advising women included their lack of NPC experience and knowledge of the sororities, and that men were not well connected with other sorority alumnae advisors. Coping strategies that Sullivan, Jelke, and Bureau recommended were to know boundaries of relationships, to set goals, to be open to compromise, and to establish mutual goals.

Nontraditional Career Choices

Lease (2003) found that very little literature existed about men in female dominated occupations and the factors that influenced males to make the decision to pursue those careers. Hayes (1989) also concluded that more research was needed about the characteristics of men in female dominated occupations.

Chusmir (1990) examined research on men who choose nontraditional careers. Specifically, Chusmir (1990) sought to determine personality and background characteristics that helped to predict their choice of career in order to develop a model that illustrated why men make nontraditional career choices. Chusmir identified family, personal, and societal influences as primary influences on men who choose a nontraditional career. Specifically, personal influences were a combination of

background, attitudes, values, and intrinsic needs. Family influences were attributed to “attitude toward family roles, relationship(s) with children, and marital status”, and societal influences were attributed to “gender role norms and support and counseling” (p. 13). Stereotypes of males holding nontraditional careers were also addressed. In opposition to negative stereotypes, Chusmir found that these men displayed a high level of comfort with themselves and their sexuality.

Lease (2003) tested Chusmir’s model of men’s nontraditional career choice by exploring the characteristics of men who stepped into female dominated jobs and other nontraditional occupations. Lease found similar outcomes to those in Chusmir’s model. Specifically, men with liberal social attitudes, more education, and an aspiration to obtain a higher level education were men more likely to choose nontraditional career fields. In addition, the level of a man’s socioeconomic status was one predictor of nontraditional career choices. Socioeconomic status was one of the variables in the model that “explained 17% of the variance in career choice” (p. 251).

To find out why men choose to enter nontraditional occupations, Hayes (1986) examined three aspects of the issue. These aspects included the reasons men did not enter occupations mostly dominated by women, discrimination and men in nontraditional occupations, and reasons men choose to enter occupations dominated by women. The negative factors that Hayes highlighted regarding why men did not enter nontraditional occupations included “economic irrationality and the male bread winner role, status loss and loss of family power, fear of success in a ‘feminized’ profession, homophobia, and subordination to and working with women” (p. 97). Hayes also determined that men may

face barriers to these occupations and discrimination from areas such as the job market, society, and co-workers.

The characteristics of men in female concentrated occupations and male concentrated occupations were compared by Hayes (1989) to debunk the stereotypes that are associated with men in female dominated occupations. Men who entered occupations traditionally held by women had been identified as a phenomenon that lacked both research and theory. Other objectives that Hayes focused on included identified characteristics that best discriminated "between the two groups in a multivariate context" (p. 202) and to investigate how presumptions in literature may have developed the stereotypes attributed to men who work at a job traditionally dominated by women. Hayes concluded that men in female concentrated occupations were "more satisfied with some dimensions of their work" (p. 210). Despite the positive outcomes, Hayes warned against applying the assumptions of the findings to all men in female dominated occupations.

Kadushin (1976) surveyed members of the National Associations of Social Work to find out if males in the social work profession encountered professional problems due to their gender. The perception of the profession of social work was described by Kadushin (1976) as the "extensions of the traditional female roles of wife and mother" (p. 441). Kadushin concluded that theories about social roles and role strain contributed to the belief that men encountered problems in female professions. Kadushin suggested that social reality led to the suspicion that men in female dominated professions were either forced to select those professions or were unable to qualify for a men's profession.

Kadushin also concluded that male social workers encountered role strain in their "relations with clients, colleagues, and the general community" (p. 446).

Stereotypes

To find out the different perceptions people have of men and women who violated gender roles, Sirin, McCreary, and Malik (2004) surveyed a small sample of people and examined three role transgression theories. They hypothesized that men who deviated from traditional gender roles received harsher punishment than did women who deviated from traditional gender roles, and were more likely to be viewed as lower in social status, and to be a homosexual. Participants were asked to read trait based descriptions and decide the gender of each person based on the descriptions. The researchers found that men who violated traditional gender roles and behavioral expectations received more negative responses in comparison to women who engaged in the same behavior.

In their study of sex-role stereotypes, Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, and Rosenkrantz (1972) defined sex-role standards as "the sum of socially designated behaviors that differentiate between men and women" (p. 60). Using a questionnaire, the researchers sought to ascertain how sex-role standards pressured men and women to act a certain way, what characteristics made up the standards, how the standards developed, and what the penalties were for not adhering to the standards. The main findings were that the characteristics of men were more desirable than those of women, the differences in characteristics between men and women were well defined, and that the self-concepts of the differences were attributed to behaviors and attitudes.

Cicone and Ruble (1978) conducted an empirical literature analysis to determine what people believed about males and their character traits. The researchers focused on

three areas: how males handled their own lives, how they handled other people, and how they handled their mind or personal psyche. The literature analysis yielded 52 adjectives that appeared on a regular basis that could be grouped in three areas: "(a) how a man handles their life, (b) how a man handles others and (c) how a man handles their psyche" (p. 11). Their attempt to produce a set of characteristics that could be attributed to all males resulted in limitations. They concluded that the limitations suggested "extremely polarized and stereotyped beliefs about males may not be as pervasive as normally thought" (p. 12).

The idea of suggesting that others pursue nontraditional careers can also be difficult to comprehend. In a study of career counselors, Fitzgerald (1980) found that college students had a bias towards the acceptance of traditional occupations. That bias did not affect how they viewed and evaluated career counselors who supported nontraditional career choices. The career counselors did not receive negative evaluations when they suggested nontraditional career paths for students.

Sex Role Identity

Pleck (1976) examined the difficulties and stresses of the male sex role through four perspectives: individual-level sex-role identity, cultural-level sex-role identity, contradictory-demands role strain, and inherent role strain. Each of these views articulated some of the more well-known characteristics of men. The changes needed to address the difficulties of the male sex-role that Pleck identified were: (a) men must accept women as peers in the work place, (b) the creation of a balanced marital relationship where men share responsibilities and (c) a need for change in relationships with other men, children, and co-workers.

To find a relationship between personality characteristics and sex roles, Stoppard and Kalin (1978) conducted a study aimed at answering the following questions: "First, do gender stereotypes and sex role conceptions overlap? Second, do sex roles contain prescriptions concerning personality characteristics, in addition to specific behaviors and tasks?" (p. 212). The results of their study suggested that distinctiveness between gender stereotypes and sex roles occurred due to the influence of social desirability. Their results also suggested that socially undesirable traits were linked with the prescriptiveness of personality.

In their study of the penalties of sex role reversal, Costrich, Feinstein, Kidder, Marecek, and Pascale (1975) found that compared to women, men may have a stronger reaction to sex role violations. They found that when men violated sex role norms, they incurred social penalties. The researchers reported this finding by stating that "perceived popularity and perceived psychiatric adjustment are indeed endangered when an individual behaves counter to a sex-role stereotype" (p. 528). Finally, they concluded that men who deviated from stereotypical gender roles did not receive more freedom to do so than did women. This may possibly lead to what the authors identified as a "fear of success" (p. 529) to be identified as being the best in a role usually occupied by women.

Feinman (1981) sought to understand why the cross-sex-role behavior of boys produced a more negative response when evaluated by other people. The two major findings were that most participants in the study did not approve of men who engage in cross-sex-role behavior and participants disapproved more of men who engaged in cross-sex-behavior than women who exhibited the same behaviors. Overall, male behavior was

more acceptable and desirable for men and women, compared to men who engaged in female behavior.

Four sources of role strain were identified by Goode (1960) in his theory of role strain: 1) role demands of an individual during certain times and places, despite the lack of difficulty of the demands, do not always result in instantaneous gratification; 2) role demands may result in conflicts of obligations and duties; 3) role relationships produce inconsistent activities and responses for an individual, because different norms and behavioral demands are associated with different role relationships; and 4) an individual has many positions in life and one of the positions naturally leads to different role relationships. Goode (1960) concluded "the individual is likely to face a wide, distracting, and sometimes conflicting array of role obligations" (p. 485). "The individual cannot satisfy fully all demands" (p. 495) and has to make decisions based on their current role to adjust to the demands of role strain. Goode identified social structure as the determinant of the level of freedom to make role decisions.

Intercollegiate Athletics

Men who coach female intercollegiate athletic teams break social norms when they take on jobs traditionally occupied by women. Jackson (1997) studied men who coached women's intercollegiate basketball and explored the relative importance of each factor that influenced them to make the decision to coach women. Jackson found that men coached female athletic teams because of their desire to compete, be a role model, and for the satisfaction they received, in part, from helping female athletes reach their potential. These men did not take their jobs to advance their professional careers.

Pastore (1991) compared the reasons men and women choose to enter and leave the profession of coaching intercollegiate women's athletic teams. Male and female National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I coaches of women's sports from major athletic conferences participated in the research. Of 255 questionnaires mailed to the coaches, 194 were returned, and all but two were used in the data analysis. One area of the survey focused on the reasons why the research participants decided to enter the coaching profession in general. Pastore found that both men and women had four similar positive responses for entering the field. Similar to Jackson's (1997) results, the four included staying involved in competitive athletics, working with advanced and motivated athletes, becoming role models, and helping female athletes reach their potential.

A study of attitudes of male and female athletes toward male and female coaches by Weinberg, Reveles, and Jackson (1984) found that male coaches were not perceived any differently by female athletes than were female coaches. This attitude was not reflected by the male athletes, however, as they exhibited more negative attitudes toward female coaches than they did toward male coaches.

Summary

Over 100 years ago men played an important role in the founding of NPC sororities. George Banta, the only male member of Delta Gamma (Delta Gamma Fraternity, 2005) was instrumental in expanding the sorority into the states north of Mississippi. James Hamilton helped found Alpha Chi Omega (Alpha Chi Omega, 2007) at DePauw University and Dr. Charles Richardson was recognized as a founder of Chi Omega (Chi Omega Fraternity, 2007).

Lease (2003) opined that very little literature existed about men in female dominated occupations and the factors that influenced them to make the decision to pursue those careers. Hayes (1989) warned against applying the findings of limited research as the basis for legitimate theory. Chusmir (1990) did find that men in non-traditional careers displayed a level of comfort with themselves and their sexuality. Hayes (1989) concluded that men in female concentrated occupations exhibited a favorable level of satisfaction towards their work.

Stoppard and Kalin (1978) found that female activities and characteristics are not socially desirable for males. Sirin, McCreary, and Malik (2004) discovered that men who engaged in female type activities were more likely to be viewed lower in social status and as homosexual. According to Weinberg, Reveles, and Jackson (1984), those who worked with men in nontraditional careers did not perceive them differently from the perceptions of female athletes toward male coaches.

The literature provides evidence that men can be and are punished socially for crossing gender roles, but those who do enjoy the experience are able to perform their jobs effectively.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

Naturalistic methodology (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001) was used to collect the data for the present study. All data were collected through one-on-one qualitative interviews with male sorority advisors. The participants in the current study were males who have and/or currently serve in an advisory role for sororities that included, but were not limited to, chapter and academic advisors. Males who professionally worked as advisors to college and university Panhellenic councils were part of the target population for the study. A total of eight participants were used for the study. Through the interviews, the researcher captured rich thick descriptive data of the holistic experiences of these male sorority advisors. Naturalistic methodology allowed the participants to (1) articulate their experiences in greater detail rather than via a questionnaire; (2) allowed the researcher to hear the inflection of the participants' voices when the participants described their experience; (3) observe participants' body language when possible; and (4) produce an audio recording of their experiences.

Potential candidates who were contacted for the study originated from a list of names of male sorority advisors that the researcher compiled through personal contacts. The sorority headquarters of the 26 National Panhellenic Conference member groups and the central office of the Association of Fraternity advisors were contacted for additional names of male sorority advisors. A letter was sent via the U.S. Postal Service and also emailed (Appendix G) to the executive director of the 26 NPC sorority headquarters requesting information on (1) the number of active chapters, (2) how many of their

advisors were male, and (3) the names and contact information of these male advisors. Similarly, the executive director of the Association of Fraternity Advisors was contacted by postal mail and email (Appendix H) requesting the names of graduate and professional members who were employed by a college or university Greek Life office with responsibilities for Greek Life. Contacting the executive directors of the 26 NPC member groups provided the researcher with a better idea of how many male sorority advisors the national sororities acknowledged.

The researcher received a total of 10 responses from the NPC sorority headquarters. No response was received from the remaining 16 NPC sorority headquarters. Of the ten responses, nine accepted the request to participate and one declined the request. The responses from the 9 NPC sorority headquarters represented a total of 1,130 collegiate chapters. The nine responses yielded no names of male sorority chapter advisors within the organizations.

Male directors of Greek Life with sole responsibility for the advisement of the Panhellenic Council on a college or university campus were also identified as potential study participants. The executive director of the Association of Fraternity Advisors was contacted to increase the number of potential participants for the study, but elected not to participate in the study.

Additional names were generated by solicitation through the Association of Fraternity Advisors online community and the 2006 Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual (AFA) Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana. A message (Appendix I) was posted through the Association of Fraternity Advisors online community articulating the nature of the research project, how to participate in the study, and the process for submitting

names of potential participants for the researcher to contact. The online community posting yield a total of 18 responses. During the AFA Annual Meeting, the researcher announced the present study and requested the names of potential participants at the Region III business meeting. AFA Region III included the states of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and the Canadian Provinces of Manitoba and Ontario. This announcement yielded the name of one new potential participant, but that person was not selected to participate in the study. Additionally, snowball sampling methodology (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001), in which the researcher asked potential participants for additional names of male sorority advisors to contact for the study, was utilized. One participant emerged as a result of snowball sampling methodology.

Participants

The participants in the present study were chosen from the responses to the message posted to the Association of Fraternity Advisors online community (Appendix I) and personal knowledge of the researcher. The participants selected from the responses to the online posting were sent, by email, the participation consent form (Appendix C) and the demographic survey (Appendix E). Participants the researcher knew from personal knowledge were first sent a letter of introduction (Appendix F) requesting their participation in the research project. Once the researcher received an email of consent to participate in the research, participants were then emailed the participation consent form (Appendix C) and the demographic survey (Appendix E). The participants were asked to complete the forms and return them by email or postal mail. After the consent form and demographic survey were sent to the participants, the researcher contacted participants by email to schedule a day and time for a one-on-one interview.

A total of eight participants were selected for the study. Four of the participants were male chapter advisors and four males were Greek Life professionals with sole responsibility for the advisement of the Panhellenic Council on a college or university campus. The participants ranged in age from 30 to 39 years old, with 35 years being the average age. Seven of the participants identified their race as White, and one identified as a Hispanic. Of the male chapter advisors, one identified his involvement as a faculty advisor, one identified his role as a chapter advisor, one identified as a recruitment advisor, and one identified as an assistant chapter advisor. The length of involvement with their respective sorority ranged from one year to five years, with the average being three and a half years. Of the four male chapter advisors, one had no previous experience working with women's organizations, and three had experience ranging from four to 16 years. Of the four male Greek Life professionals with sole responsibility for the advisement of the Panhellenic Council on a college or university campus, two identified their involvement as the Assistant Dean of Students, one identified as the Director of Greek Life, and one identified as an Assistant Director of Campus Life. The number of years they have been involved with women's organizations ranged from one and a half years to 10 years, with the average being seven years. One participant was currently not employed as a Greek Life professional. Two of the male Greek Life professionals identified as having no prior experience working with women's organizations, and two identified they did, with one having 10 years of experience and the other having two year's experience. All participants were college graduates. Two participants held a bachelor's degree, three held a master's degree, and three had earned doctorates. The current professional positions of the participants ranged from three currently holding a

position within Greek Life at a college or university, one working as an Associate Professor, one serving as the associate executive director of a national Greek organization, one currently a doctoral student, one president/CEO of a fraternity / sorority consulting firm, and one serving as a speaker and partner of a collegiate speaking agency.

Instruments

The researcher served as the instrument for data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Limited field notes were recorded by the researcher during some of the interviews. The interviews were arranged to occur either in person or via electronic communication. Two face-to-face interviews took place at the 2006 Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual Meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana. The remaining six interviews took place via telephone. All participants were asked the same protocol questions (Appendix D). The protocol questions (Appendix D) were created using the personal experiences of the researcher as a male sorority advisor and used to answer the five research questions presented in chapter I.

Data Collection

All participants were required to sign a statement of informed consent (Appendix C) indicating agreement to voluntarily participate in the study. Prior to signing the form, all risks, including confidentiality, privacy, and harm (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), were explained to the participants, including their right to withdraw from the research at any time without penalty. The researcher set up times to interview the participants one-on-one by phone or in person. Two of the interviews were conducted with the use of a digital recorder. The remaining six interviews were conducted through the use of a

telephone and recorded with digital phone recording equipment. Interviews varied in length. The shortest (telephone) interview required only 13 minutes and the longest (face-to-face) interview lasted 42 minutes. The average length of a participant interview was 29 minutes.

One-on-one interviews with the participants were conducted, transcribed, and evaluated using the constant-comparative method of qualitative analysis (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) by the researcher. Only the researcher had access to the audio files and only the transcribed data interview transcripts were shared with the thesis chair. After data transcription by the researcher, transcripts were sent back to each participant for member-checking (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001) to determine if the interview responses were accurately represented in the transcription. Some participants returned transcriptions with minor corrections that reflected clarity and accuracy of their thoughts.

Treatment of the Data

Following data transcription, the information was analyzed for common and dissimilar themes (LeCompte, Millroy, & Preissle, 1992). The data is presented in chapter IV in narrative format, highlighting consistent themes derived from the respondent interviews.

Summary

Chapter III detailed the research methodology for the present study. Chapter IV will address the five research questions presented in chapter I. The research questions and their corresponding protocol questions (Appendix D) precede the responses from the participants. The data presented in chapter IV captures the experiences and voice of the participants. Chapter V presents the findings for the present study, and suggestions for student affairs practitioners and future researchers.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS / FINDINGS

Participants for the present study consisted of four male sorority chapter advisors and four male college professionals that advise Panhellenic Councils. To provide substance to participants' voices, a profile of each male sorority advisor is provided for the reader.

Male Chapter Advisors

The first male sorority advisor served as the chapter advisor to an NPC sorority at a Southeastern public doctoral granting research institution and has been involved with the chapter since 2002. He is a Hispanic male in his late thirties. He has a doctorate degree and 16 years of prior experience working with women's organizations as a campus Greek Life professional and a sorority chapter advisor. This sorority advisor currently is the CEO of a higher education consulting firm.

The second male sorority advisor served as the assistant chapter advisor to an NPC sorority at a Northeastern private doctoral granting research institution and has been involved with the sorority chapter since 2002. He is a White male in his mid-thirties. He has a bachelor's degree and 11 years of prior experience working with women's organizations. This sorority advisor is also a professional campus speaker and partner in a speaking agency.

The third male sorority advisor served as the chapter and university advisor to an NPC sorority at a Northeastern public master's granting institution and has been involved with the chapter since 2002. He is a White male in his late thirties, has a doctorate degree and is an associate professor of philosophy.

The fourth male sorority advisor served as the recruitment advisor to an NPC sorority at a Midwestern public doctoral granting research institution and has been involved with the sorority since 2006. He is a White male in his early thirties. He has a bachelor's degree and four years of prior experience working with women's organizations. The fourth male sorority advisor was the associate executive director for a national Latina sorority.

The first four male sorority advisors voluntarily served as advisors and did not receive financial payment for their work with the sorority chapters.

Males who Advise Panhellenic Councils

The fifth male sorority advisor was the assistant dean of students for fraternity and sorority life at a Southern private doctoral granting research institution. He is a White male in his mid-thirties. He has a master's degree and has worked with sororities the last decade, including prior full time and graduate school experience in Greek Life.

The sixth male sorority advisor was the assistant director of campus life and advised all fraternities and sororities at a Southeastern public doctoral granting research institution. He is a White male in his early thirties. He has a master's degree and has worked with sororities for the past seven years, including experience at a previous institution. In addition to being a campus professional, the sixth male sorority advisor also served as the recruitment advisor to a NPC sorority located in the Southeastern region.

The seventh male sorority advisor was the Director of Greek Life who advised Panhellenic sororities at a Western public doctoral granting research institution. He has been in his current position since 2005. He is a White male in his late thirties. He has a

doctorate degree and had no experience working with sororities prior to his current position.

The eighth male sorority advisor currently does not work with fraternities and sororities. He has 10 years of experience working with sororities as the assistant dean of students at a Midwestern public doctoral granting research institution, and Greek Advisor at a Northeastern public doctoral granting research institution. He is a White male in his late thirties. He has a master's degree and his previous experience working with sororities includes advising a Latina sorority. He is currently finishing work on his doctorate.

The Greek Life professionals who served as male sorority advisors were paid employees of institutions of higher education. They received financial payment for their work the PHC and other undergraduate Greek letter organizations on campus.

Analysis of the Findings

The themes presented in the current chapter emerged from the protocol questions for the present study. The specific questions asked during the one-on-one interview as they relate to the five research questions are identified in the chapter. Responses that emerged from other protocol questions during the one-on-one were also used to address the research questions and identify the themes for the present research study.

To ensure a thorough and accurate report of the findings of the study, the themes will be placed under one of two groups: chapter advisors and Greek Life professionals. The two groups shared similar experiences yet it was important to identify the differences due to the fact that chapter advisors fill volunteer positions and Greek Life professionals

are full time paid staff members. The one important common similarity was that men in both groups worked directly with sororities.

The emergent themes represent the thoughts and experiences of at least two of the four male sorority advisors in each group. The themes that a majority of the participants experienced are highlighted in detail to provide a greater understanding of their group experience. Similarities between the two groups are also highlighted. Outliers of significant importance are presented with the themes.

Research Question 1: Why do males become sorority advisors?

The protocol questions asked during the one-on-one interviews for research question one were:

- (1) What has been your prior experience in advising Greek letter organizations?
- (2) What specific experiences influenced your decision to become a sorority advisor?
- (3) How were you selected/appointed/hired to advise a sorority?

Chapter Advisors

This first question produced five common themes from the four volunteer chapter advisors. These primary themes were (1) a personal relationship with a chapter member and members of the national organization, (2) previous experience working with fraternities, (3) a need by the sorority, (4) personal gains (e.g. tenure and promotion), and (5) desire for a change in volunteer experiences. Of these themes, the first three occurred in each respondent's interview.

The first male sorority advisor spent two years working professionally for his fraternity headquarters and described his experience of being asked to serve as a sorority advisor with some surprise:

I was friends with the executive director and one day she was joking about how they can't find any members, anybody to be advisor to that chapter because no one lives in that town. I said, "Hell, if you guys are that desperate, I'll do it". I never thought that individual sororities did that, but they were kind of progressive and were like "Great, why don't you do that? You have experience". It ended up that the chapter was about to get suspended. By the time I graduated, not

necessarily because of me, but they ended up winning their national top one percent award.

His experiences during his doctoral study led him to his current role as the chapter advisor for a different chapter of the same sorority in his current location.

After graduating from college, the second male sorority advisor had experience working professionally with fraternities on college campuses on the East Coast and described his first encounter of working with a sorority on a college campus with enthusiasm, refreshment, and interest about the experience:

...one of the times at a school, a sorority executive board walked in. I didn't even notice that there was a sorority on the list and they came in and all of a sudden I said, "Listen, I don't know much about sororities. I will tell you what I tell the men and we can talk about how you can make it work for you". Again, specifically in recruitment issues, these women impressed me. I saw the difference that many people notice that first time in seeing a way a sorority executive board operates, especially, a well developed one...I kept that in the back of my mind and slowly over the years as a speaker and consultant, campuses would bring me and sometimes national organizations would pay for me to do a recruitment retreat for a sorority. Or, while I was on campus, I'd spend some time, in particular, with one sorority that was a generally struggling chapter.

The second male sorority advisor went on to speak with fondness about talking with his friend and colleague about how rewarding his early experiences were as a sorority advisor and how it influenced his decision to become a sorority advisor. After a move to a new city and a decision that it was time for a change in volunteer experience,

the second male advisor met the Greek Advisor at his current location in a Northeastern research institution and said:

...if there is a sorority on campus that is good but should be great. As in there is enough to work with that won't drive me crazy, but there is enough that they are also able to do in growing that it would be a good experience and challenge, that would be interested in having a male advisor. It was a colony of Sorority A at the time, who had been a local organization, sort of spun from that. I approached the women. They discussed it and voted on me and then it got passed up and I got a national appointment to be a sorority advisor of Sorority A. That is how it came to be.

He decided to approach that sorority as a result of his prior connections to the organization and strongly reiterated their need for volunteers.

...they [Sorority A] had been a client in the past. I had spoken at their sorority's convention. Also, the group is...they are volunteer hungry. They are volunteer hungry.

The fourth male sorority advisor worked several years professionally for his national fraternity and currently worked at the headquarters for a national Latina sorority. He described how his decision to become a male sorority advisor stemmed from already working with two other chapters and his knowledge of the situation from the viewpoint of a Greek Advisor with a sense of responsibility to take action:

I was working already with two chapters on campus and I found out the Sorority B colony, at the time, did not have an advisor at all. They didn't have anyone working with them. They were just working with the campus Greek Advisor,

fraternity and sorority advisor. I offered because I had a professional background in [group advising]. I was doing it volunteer as well. I said, "Well I might have an opportunity to help out some way". Just so they have a little bit more support and because I had background in the matter, I kind of offered myself up. I met some of the undergraduates and decided that it could work out. I guess just from an advisory perspective and giving them some outside perspective, helping challenge them a little bit. Because I had the other experience, I think that is what lent myself to it.

Greek Life Professionals

The first question about prior experience advising Greek Letter organizations produced four common themes from the Greek life professionals. The themes were (1) part of the job responsibilities, (2) wanted the opportunity to make change, (3) wanted sorority advising experience, and (4) had a positive undergraduate experience.

The two most frequently occurring themes were (1) part of the job responsibilities and (2) wanted sorority advising experience.

The fifth male sorority advisor, a paid campus professional, first experienced advising Panhellenic council and sororities as a graduate assistant. He provided a very thoughtful and well developed response to the experiences that influenced his decision to advise sororities. The tone of his voice exhibited a level of passion for his decision:

Well, for me it was an opportunity to deal with a broad cross section of students and issues and Greek communities on most campuses provide that. But only if you have an opportunity to work with the women's groups as well as the men's groups. I think it provides context for the other population with which you might

be dealing with. Whether in this case we are slicing it by gender, but you can look at it in other ways, too. So it's really an opportunity for me to see the big picture and do it through the eyes of not just fraternity members but female fraternity or sorority members as well.

The eighth male sorority advisor lethargically described his reason for working with sororities as responsibilities that came with his first Greek Advisor job.

Most of the positions I applied for were dual, they were dual positions. They were like fraternity and sorority together so it just sort of [seemed normal]. I certainly didn't wake up and say I want to advise sororities. I want to learn the ins and outs of the NPC. I want to live and breathe, you know, computer rush [a PC based sorority recruitment program]. It was other duties as assigned.

He later emphasized that he did not deliberately and proactively search out jobs out of desire to work with sororities. His responses reflected an attitude of accepting that working with and advising sororities was part of his campus job responsibilities:

So, the sorority thing was just part of the package....I didn't strike off into higher ed. to become a sorority advisor, it just sort of, I just sort of fell into it. Fell into the whole Greek world and realized I enjoyed it for the most part and I was good at it and the positions that I have applied for have come. They were just packaged positions, and sororities were just part of the deal.

Research Question 2: What are the feelings associated with the role of a male advisor to a sorority?

The protocol questions asked during the one-on-one interviews for research question two were:

- (1) Describe the level of self satisfaction you received from advising a sorority.
- (2) Describe the different relationships you have with the members of the sorority.

Chapter Advisors

The second question produced six common themes from the four chapter advisors. The themes were (1) a very satisfying experience, (2) gratification from seeing members strive to be excellent, (3) an establishment of friendship, (4) a close working relationship with chapter officers, (5) members verbalized their appreciation, and (6) helping members on an individual level. Of these, the most frequently occurring themes were (1) a very satisfying experience and (2) helping members on an individual level.

The third male sorority advisor responded very positively and exuded a sense of pride for the opportunity to work with the sorority. He described his feelings by saying:

...I can only say it has been very satisfactory... they maintain high academic standards and they have increased as I have been the sorority advisor. Not because of me but because of their work. It has been very gratifying to see that....It is nice to be with an organization that you are there with for the long haul. I have every anticipation that I will be the advisor for this group until I retire, and that is what I tell them every time I see them. So, 30 years hence, if I am still at the university, I will still be their advisor, and so I find that to be

particularly gratifying...I have been able to help them in terms with each other when problems arise. I have been able to be a sort of mediator between individuals, and I consider that to be very helpful, a very rewarding experience. It is nice to be able to work for an organization that you feel like you have made a difference with.

The second male sorority advisor gave a very genuine response expressing more than once how great the experience had been for him. A sense of joy and excitement could be heard in his voice during his response.

It's great. It really is. I don't know how much of it is the advising a different group from my own in general....Just the appreciation. I remember, and this was one of the reasons that I was excited.....They gave me an award at their last convention. I think they gave three awards. They are so appreciative. And the women across the country....these women in other chapters, I can see great pride and appreciation from them. That appreciation makes it very rewarding.

Honestly, it makes me feel a little guilty because I don't get to do, a whole lot...It is just the appreciation is just beyond what I see myself actually giving. So it makes me feel guilty and want to kind of give more. But it is very, very satisfying.

Greek Life Professionals

The second question dealing with the feelings of being in the role of a male advisor to a sorority produced five common themes from the four Greek life professionals. The themes were (1) a high level of satisfaction, (2) more depth of relationships with the Panhellenic officers, (3) experience of having Panhellenic members

work harder to perform at a high level, (4) feedback and appreciation from the members, and (5) the ability of Panhellenic officers to listen and work to make change. All the Greek life professionals had very common experiences and only one theme was experienced by all four participants - more depth of relationships with the Panhellenic officers. A majority of the Greek Life professionals also expressed a high level of satisfaction with their experience as a sorority advisor.

The sixth male campus professional sorority advisor reflected on his relationships with the Panhellenic officers and compared his experience working with women to working with men from his former and current experiences. His initial response to the question began with a laugh. As he began his response with a significant pause in the middle searching for the best way to answer the question, he shared:

I would say advising women's groups, for me, has been a higher satisfaction rate than men. My last Panhellenic council before I took this job was very able to set goals and get things and worked toward making opportunities and things happen for their women. They were driven, they weren't concerned with the thought process, with what the men were doing.

The sixth male campus professional sorority advisor also went on to describe his relationship with the Panhellenic officers at his former institution with a sense of enjoyment:

...at my previous job they were very open. My presidents were very willing to listen. I still talk to them and it has been a positive opportunity.

He also described the relationship with the Panhellenic members at his current institution as positive but did so with some hesitation to find the right words:

...I would say that it's always been an open and honest relationship and for each of them...they [council presidents and council executive officers] view the relationship more positively because we seldom have to talk about negative experiences... Our relationships are usually good because we follow up, we are doing things, we are moving things forward.

The seventh male campus professional sorority advisor spoke very highly about his experience working with Panhellenic officers. There was a sense of satisfaction in his voice:

Well, the satisfaction I receive is that I feel that the Panhellenic leaders that I interact with really accomplish a lot and really do a lot and get a lot of things done. There is a real high level of dedication. This past year has been great. The student leaders have done so much to start working toward change... I will tell you, this past year with the same group of students that I started with...has been phenomenal.... I think they really work hard and they really try to make things happen.

He went on to describe how great his relationship was with the Panhellenic officers in terms of being an advisor.

I've got great advisory relationships with the women when it comes to doing programming to consider different things that relate to their positions. And again, that evolves over time...I think with the Panhellenic president, we have a very close relationship.

One theme from both the volunteer chapter advisors and Greek Life professionals stood out in their responses. Their experiences of getting feedback and appreciation from

the members of the chapter and the Panhellenic Council were expressed with great emotion and joy. It is important to highlight this theme of feedback and appreciation from the members and the positive effect it had on the participants.

The first male sorority advisor compared his experience to working with fraternities and described how his relationship with the sorority members had lasted for a long time after their advising relationship had ended.

They are so much more. They are so much better at thanking you than fraternities, and so much better about keeping you informed about stuff than fraternities that it is just a pleasure to work with them....There, are I would say, 10 to 12 woman that I have advised in the past that I would consider people that I am in pretty constant touch with. I am talking about over a span of 15 years...It is great because you get to hear about, you know, they had kids and this and that. You get to stay with that whole. You get to relive how great they are and they thank you again. Then, they are like "you helped me so much" and this and that. It is like a much more well-rounded feeling having done some of that.

The fifth male campus professional sorority advisor related how sorority members have shown their appreciation since he first started to see it materialize in his job:

Well, I have found, at least until more recently, I have found that women are much more likely to share their feelings...particularity when I started, it was again a kind of a whole new world for me, and the women's level of comfortability once they got to know you, sharing personal things or things going on in their organizations, issues that they were dealing with...the women were putting it out on the table and saying "let's talk about it" and you better to be able

to be ready to discuss it or at least listen. You know, I get a lot of gratification because that shows who I am, you know they trust me. In that case, I am one of the girls. They are willing to do that, you know up to a certain point. And there is some satisfaction there because if they, if they feel like you've helped them in some way, they are going to let you know. They will tell you to your face. They will tell you publicly. They will write you a small note. So that kind of gratification you get because they will tell you. They will give you that kind of almost instantaneous feedback. Being true to their emotions is nice.

Research Question 3: How do males deal with the issues of sexual attraction/conflict, gender differences, and their desire to be accepted as a sorority advisor?

The specific protocol questions asked during the one-on-one interviews to explore the possibility of sexual attraction / conflict, and gender differences that may be related to a man's acceptance as a sorority advisor were the following.

- (1) Describe the challenges, obstacles, and barriers you have had to overcome as an advisor.
- (2) Describe any experiences where you felt uncomfortable working with the sorority.

Chapter Advisors

Emerging responses to the inquiry about sexual attraction / conflict, and gender differences possibly related to acceptance of a male in a traditionally female role position produced five common themes from the chapter advisors. The themes were (1) lack of knowledge about the NPC organizations, (2) communication difficulties with members, (3) creating a distance with relationships so that members do not get too close, (4) building relationships, and (5) addressing member issues and behaviors.

Themes most frequently occurring were (1) lack of knowledge about the NPC organizations, (2) communication with members, and (3) creating a distance with relationships so that members do not get too close.

The third male sorority advisor, an associate professor of philosophy, very directly pointed out that his lack of knowledge of Greek life was and continued to be a challenge for him:

I would say that the biggest challenge is experience...I did not bring any experience to the table whatsoever. Not having ever been through a Greek organization, there is so much that I did not know and still do not know, to be perfectly honest. So, I have considered myself to be a work in process as an advisor...Understanding the language that goes on, understanding the acronyms, the deadlines...I can say that the biggest challenge is simply overcoming my lack of experience.

He later expressed a level of concern and self awareness for the importance of ensuring that he is not having any unhealthy relationships with members in the chapter. He identified that having to be so cognizant of his actions had led to communication gaps:

...I have to maintain some sort of diplomatic distance with my sorority in order to avoid any suggestions of impropriety or perceptions of impropriety. So that has caused a little bit of my being out of the communications link with the sorority regarding certain kinds of issues, and I think that has caused some problems sometimes.

The fourth male sorority advisor hesitated with his response before identifying challenges he encountered:

I think policy and procedure because I am not as familiar with NPC policy in particular. My learning curve has been very great on that, I think, understanding that and being able to advise effectively. There were some bumps in the road initially; I think, to some extent styles of communication. But I don't know if it is

so much me with them, but understanding their styles of communication with one another.

Greek Life Professionals

Emerging responses to the inquiry about sexual attraction / conflict, and gender differences possibly related to acceptance of a male in a traditionally female role position produced four common themes from the Greek Life professionals. The themes were (1) managing the personality styles of women and how they differ from men, (2) dealing with women's issues, (3) interaction with chapter advisors, alumnae members, and NPC delegates, and (4) building relationships with undergraduate officers.

Themes that occurred most frequently were (1) managing the personality styles of women and how they differ from men and (2) relationships with advisors, alumnae members, and NPC delegates.

The eighth male campus professional sorority advisor identified the most with the struggle with alumnae and advisors. He had a change in voice inflection and expressed frustration when he responded:

Well, I would say I've had more problems; I had more challenges with the alumnae than anything else...Most of my challenges were with the alumna. You know you are not from College A, or you are not from College B...There was a sorority at College B that failed in membership while I was there and the National ended up closing the chapter. Of course, everyone wants an escape goat, so they blamed the university, lack of support, blah blah blah. I think in part they blamed me for not spending enough time with Panhellenic [in supporting the failing chapter].

The fifth male campus professional sorority advisor slowly responded to the challenges he faced with alumnae as a young Greek Advisor:

...when I was a little wet behind the ears and I was newer, the alumnae members provided a bigger challenge...So my biggest issues have come when there have been other members, particularly ones that are not active anymore, but might be of the alumnae variety. Whether they are working for a national organization or not, they have maybe looked at me as someone that isn't capable, or fully knowledgeable, or understanding of the issue or issues at hand.

One theme that emerged but was not the most common among the participants was dealing with women's issues. The participants who discussed this challenge emphasized how important it was to learn about the specific issue and the difficulties they experienced dealing with it among the sorority members. The fifth male professional sorority advisor spoke very specifically to this issue and how long it had taken him to feel educated enough to effectively address women's issues with sorority members:

...the issues related particularly to women's health and body image and the roles that often are perpetuated about women in, not just society, but sometimes are magnified in Greek organizations and sororities in that culture and not fully understanding that issue. It took me several years and now it's still prevalent. So I think that was an area that caught me off guard. I just didn't know enough about it and didn't have enough exposure to it. It was something that was dealt with on a day to day basis...a large chapter could have several members that were struggling with those issues. So I think body image, eating disorders, those were some things I had very little knowledge and how to confront, but be able to deal

with all the factors that come along with it. The feelings of guilt not only by the people suffering but their friends and the chapter leadership and how do we address it....It might seem like kind of a little thing. It really took me a few years to gather enough information and to feel confident in having discussions about it.

The second male volunteer sorority advisor described his experience with a sense of amazement and surprise.

So, I have dealt with things that I never imagined that I could have dealt with.

The emotional issues. Attempted suicide, where luckily I have been able to call friends that are experts in mental health in college and have access to these people saying I am so in above my head dealing with those issues...things that I have no training in, that I am the only person that they will come to at some point and that has really been a challenge for me. Never had to deal with that in fraternity advising for years. Definitely.

Research Question 4: How do the age and gender of male sorority advisors affect their ability to be taken seriously by students, alumnae and headquarters staff members?

The protocol questions asked during the one-on-one interviews to address issues surrounding the age and gender of male sorority advisors were the following.

- (1) What perceptions or stereotypes do your colleagues / peers have about your involvement as a male sorority advisor?
- (2) How receptive were the members of the (a) chapter, (b) alumnae, (c) other sorority advisors, and (d) headquarters staff members of the organization to your involvement with the sorority?

Chapter Advisors

The fourth research question focusing on the age and gender of male sorority advisors produced seven common themes from among the chapter advisors. The themes are presented in one of four categories: peers, chapter members, headquarters and national staff, and other sorority advisors. The common themes for age peers of the male sorority advisors were (1) reactions of surprise, confusion, and oddity, (2) questions of why and motivation and (3) support from professionals in the field of student affairs. The theme for chapter members were (4) members were appreciative, receptive, welcoming, and accepting. The theme for alumnae and volunteers were (5) positive experiences. The theme for headquarters and national staff members were (6) support from the headquarters staff. The theme for other sorority advisors were (7) stunned reactions and questions about male involvement in sorority recruitment.

Age Peers.--The theme that occurred the most from peers were reactions of surprise, confusion, and oddity.

Chapter Members.--The themes that occurred the most from chapter members were appreciated, receptive, welcoming, and accepting.

Headquarters Staff. -- The theme that occurred the most from headquarters and national office staff was support from the headquarters staff.

The first male sorority advisor provided a response to the inquiry about age and gender that highlighted his 15 years of experience. He described the reaction from his friends with an air of sarcasm:

...the perception with your friends...I always get the...'oh that's got to be a really hard job. Yeah, man, that must be nice. What do you do? Teach them how to pillow fight?' And the other stereotypical bullshit that comes with that.

He carefully described how others outside of the field of student affairs reacted to his sorority involvement:

People who are not in the field are the ones who seem to joke around about it, but no one in the field has an issue or question...Externally, people are confused about what it is and what I do. They are confused about what I do anyway, whether it is a sorority or not.

The fourth volunteer male sorority advisor described the reactions of the chapter members to his age and gender in a matter of fact way.

The chapter has been very warm and welcoming. It has been very positive; I don't think there has been any negative response at all. None that I certainly know of and none that has been expressed to me, either directly or indirectly...I think they were very appreciative because they knew initially I had no real vested interest in them as a group and was still willing to commit my time.

The second male sorority advisor spoke very fondly about the great level of appreciation he received from the alumnae sorority volunteers:

...the volunteers of the organization are fantastic. They invited me to their dinner tonight [at the AFA annual meeting] with their sisters just like Fraternity A invites their volunteers that happened to be here. I am included as much as they can and they are so very appreciative. I don't think they miss an opportunity to thank me. Which is very nice.

Some participants did have specific experiences where they encountered resistance from national officers and headquarters staff members. It was important to examine their experiences.

The second volunteer male sorority advisor experienced some resistance from older alumnae sorority volunteers. He described the experience with no personal resentment but with an understanding that not everyone understands:

The oldest volunteers that I don't have any regular contact...They were not as receptive and I think there are some of them that philosophically that wanted sisters advising chapters, and some of them didn't philosophically like the idea of men volunteering working with sisters. So there was actually in that last convention a bylaw brought up while I was there to mandate that chapter advisors, assistant chapter advisors, both must be members. And members in good standing is how they put it. But what's interesting is in their structure, I have a vote. So I got to vote at their national convention, and got to vote against that bylaw...So what is the really funniest part of this is one, the bylaw came up, it failed, so I got to keep my job. I was booked to actually speak there, so right after

that failed, the next order of business was me speaking doing my program and at the end of it they gave me an award...In a sequence of events, I kept my job, I spoke, and I was given this award. So it was really very interesting...this came from their board of trustees, which they have their executive council and then past executive, or I believe it is only past presidents, are asked to serve on a board of trustees which is more like a board of directors to keep the institutional memory and advise that elected group. So this came from that board of trustees.

Greek Life Professionals

Analysis of responses to the fourth question dealing with the age and gender of the male sorority advisors resulted in five common themes from the Greek life professionals. The themes were in one of three categories: chapter members, headquarters and national staff, and alumnae and volunteers. The common themes for chapter members were a (1) desire for a female advisor and (2) apprehension and discomfort for the male sorority advisor from the chapters. The themes from the alumnae and volunteers were that (3) they were the biggest critics and created barriers and challenges. The themes from the headquarters and national staff were (4) they were concerned about the knowledge of the advisor and (5) all three women's sub-groups experienced difficulty with males as sorority advisors. The themes that occurred most often were (1) the concern about the knowledge of the advisor and (2) the shared experience of difficulty interacting with the headquarters national staff.

The seventh male professional sorority advisor was very quick to describe his experience of being hired for his current position and how direct the members of the campus women's sorority / fraternity community were with their discomfort of his hiring.

At first I think there was tremendous discomfort...people let me know in the beginning when I took the job that they wanted a woman for the job that had Panhellenic sorority experience and that wasn't only local chapter advisors. It was also some of the key student leaders on Panhellenic, and it was also different representatives from the National Panhellenic Conference...They just were saying they were advocating for someone else.

He continued by expressing his view of the receptiveness of the different groups he had interacted with during his limited time in the position:

I would say right now there is confidence in me...from some of the chapter advisors, then from some of the house directors, and then from some of the house corporation board members. I would say the trust has more to deal with the number of times we have interacted and worked together to see that we are all trying to make this better...So the people I work with less I think don't really know me enough and are not really sure what I am bringing to the position and everything.

The eighth male professional sorority advisor described a meeting that took place at a regional conference about the decisions he made for the Greek community at his institution:

Well, there was a secret meeting at MGCA one year, Mid American Greek Council Association. It was about the decisions I had made. So the NPC national group representatives, I think they looked at me with kind of a weary look...There was some concern among the NPC representatives that I was going to force every sorority to have women participate in this party patrol. I was a very staunch

supporter of peer enforcement, and because if the Greeks don't do it then the university or police were going to do it...The NPC pulled together a secret meeting at MGCA and sort of surprised me, 'hey we want you to come over here with me, we want to talk to you'. Around the corner I went and there was a table full of the NPC brass trying to confront me on some of these issues. I never played the NPC game and I think some of them were concerned. Had it been at another school that was established with quota total they probably wouldn't have been concerned as here at College A. I had most of my critics I would say were in the alumnae ranks, although I had two or three very vocal critics. Mostly sororities that didn't want to go to the quota total system, they didn't want to change....Most of problems were, from number one the alumnae, and to a lesser extent when I broke some of the NPC rules and tried to bend them at all I caught their attention.

Research Question 5: How do male sorority advisors manage personally sensitive and ethical issues?

The protocol question below was asked during the one-on-one interviews to seek participants' approaches to managing sensitive / ethical issues.

(1) Describe the training and any support you received from a national office or regional volunteer team when you became a sorority advisor.

Responses that emerged from all 10 protocol questions relating to the sensitive and ethical issues of male sorority advisors were used to answer research question five.

Chapter Advisors

The fifth question dealing with sensitive / ethical issues produced two common themes based on chapter advisors' responses. The themes were (1) maintained a diplomatic distance from the members and (2) learn from personal experiences.

The first male advisor reflected on the precautions he had taken over the years working with sorority members and living in a sorority house as a house director in graduate school. There is a sense of maturity in his response after having had time to realize the importance of his actions:

I always had to leave my door open when I talked to somebody. I always had to be very careful about what I said, or how I said it, and make sure there was no misunderstanding of things. You have to be careful with that kind of stuff. There is always the potential of crushes or whatever on both sides. People are human too...I tried to always meet with more than one person at a time. Unless it was counseling, strict counseling....I did not really talk a whole lot about my personal life. I did somewhat with a handful of people but it was not like

everyone knew who I was dating or what was going on. I just felt it was better to keep that at some point of an arm's distance.

The second male sorority advisor reflected with a level of emphasis about his efforts to create a physical and emotional distance with the members:

I don't initiate a hug. Many of them will hug me, some of them don't. But I try not to initiate a hug unless it is someone that regularly will hug me and I know that it is ok. I try to keep a good personal space. I don't bring up topics like alcohol or relationships unless they have brought it up to me, and then once they have [broached] it to me and we have had conversations about it...I try to be careful.

Greek Life Professionals

The fifth question on managing sensitive / ethical issues produced five common themes resulting from the Greek life professionals' interviews. The themes were (1) learned from other professionals, (2) utilize NPC advisors and leaders, (3) build personal relationships with the members, (4) learn from professional development opportunities and (5) learn from on the job training. The themes that occurred most frequently were (1) learn from other professionals, (2) learn from professional development opportunities, and (3) learn from on the job training.

The seventh male professional sorority advisor reflected on his experience attending the AFA Annual Meeting and the mentorship he received from other Panhellenic members:

You know, specifically, I went to the AFA conference and that was helpful. I did that my first semester on the job so I was able to attend workshops...I went to

Oklahoma this past summer to visit Person A at College C, and she in many ways has become an additional mentor for me, and has provided a lot of really good helpful feedback for how do you change a community, because College C was pretty much in the situation we were in a year and a half ago, they were in about 10 years ago. So she has the experience of working with a community to make change. So I had those informal mentors. I am also in contact a lot with the Panhellenic area advisor, her name is Person B. She oversees the campuses that are in Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico.

The fifth male professional sorority advisor reflected on specific experiences that had helped him overcome challenges he had faced.

There were really two things that helped me. One was the year that I was in graduate school...I ended up having to be the primary, basically sole advisor to the Panhellenic Association. From things ranging from recruitment, to membership education, and programming that you would do related to women's issues or risk management for instance. That was probably my best not only exposure, but where I learned the most. And that somewhat on my own, but it was because I was thrown into it...I think the second thing that helped me was probably IFI. The Interfraternity Institute. I went after my first year, in my first professional job, and attended for a week in the summer in between my first and second year of my full time position at College D. And the exposure to not only other fairly new Greek advisors, but also national staff that happened to be there from fraternities and sororities gave me a lot of insight about how

the NPC organizations run. The steps that they normally take when they do something. The expectations that come from the various constituents of those organizations. And I learned just as much from the men that either advised or had worked with NPC organizations, as I did from the women who were a part of them.

Summary of Findings

In chapter IV, the shared experiences of volunteer and professional male sorority advisors were highlighted. Though all participants had their own unique reason(s) for wanting to work with sororities, their experiences showed that there were commonalities that can be drawn from their involvement. The male sorority advisors all expressed very positive and rewarding experiences working with sorority members. Some male sorority advisors were more involved and had more experience than others and it was reflected in their responses. A majority expressed in some form that the alumnae members were one of their biggest obstacles. A unique theme emerged from the findings. The challenge of dealing with body image issues was difficult for the male sorority advisors and one they felt unprepared to address.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to explore the phenomenon of men as sorority advisors of historically white sororities. The catalyst for the study was a result of the researcher's own experience as a male sorority advisor, so the study became a cathartic experience. The present study allowed the researcher to make sense of some of the frustration and challenges that he faced as a male sorority advisor and create closure from the experience. One limitation to the study was defining the unknown population of males who served as sorority chapter advisors in an experience similar to that of the researcher. Another limitation was the researcher sought to capture rich data and thick descriptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) and did not capture as much as initially intended. To ensure that the researcher found eight participants, the population for the study was expanded to include males who professionally worked as advisors to college and university Panhellenic councils. This expansion resulted in a range of responses from participants about their experience as a male sorority advisor. Despite the difference in experiences in working with sororities, common themes from the two groups were evident, as well as unique themes resulting from working with the local chapter members as a volunteer, and working with female chapter leaders as a campus professional fraternity / sorority advisor.

Whereas Chusmir (1990) identified that family, personal, and societal influences played a role in men choosing nontraditional career choices, the findings of the present research suggested other reasons. The participants proactively became male sorority advisors due to the need for an advisor by the organization, a personal relationship, and /

or the participant's desire to have sorority advising experience. The fifth male sorority advisor described his reason for becoming a sorority advisor as a personal decision and opportunity.

Well, for me it was an opportunity to deal with a broad cross section of students and issues and Greek communities on most campuses provide that. But only if you have an opportunity to work with the women's groups as well as the men's groups. I think it provides context for the other population with which you might be dealing. Whether in this case we are slicing it by gender, but you can look at it in other ways, too. So it's really an opportunity for me to see the big picture and do it through the eyes of not just fraternity members but female fraternity or sorority members as well.

Hayes' (1989) finding that men in female dominated occupations were more satisfied with some proportions of their working experience is similar to some of the satisfaction male sorority advisors experienced. The participants found that the opportunity to develop deeper relationships with the members and help them on an individual level was more satisfying and rewarding than some of the other experiences (e.g., conflict with alumnae and sorority volunteers) they had as a male sorority advisor. The second male sorority advisor described his relationship with the sorority members with joy and excitement.

It's great. It really is. I don't know how much of it is the advising of a different group from my own in general....Just the appreciation. I remember, and this was one of the reasons that I was excited.....They gave me an award at their last convention. I think they gave three awards. They are so appreciative.

The male sorority advisors found the personalities of women to be different than men and challenging to them, sometimes making it difficult to communicate and connect with the members. This experience is in line with the differences in male and female communication in relation to men advising women as described by Sullivan, Jelke, and Bureau (2002). This is also supported by Tannen (1990) who stated that males and females speak different "genderlects" (p. 42) versus dialects. Females do not challenge each other; enjoy talking to another, and "are more concerned that they be liked" (p. 44) according to Tannen. This is in contrast to the way males communicate which Tannen described as a more direct approach where orders are given to others. The fourth male sorority advisor found it difficult to understand the communication styles of the sorority members.

There were some bumps in the road initially; I think, to some extent styles of communication. But I don't know if it is so much me with them, but understanding their styles of communication with one another.

Sirin, McCreary, and Malik (2004) found that men who violated gender roles and behavioral expectations received harsher responses than women who violated gender roles. Findings from the present study produced similar results. The reaction of peers to male sorority advisors consisted of surprise, confusion, and stereotypes. Additionally Costrich, Feinstein, Kidder, Marecek, and Pascale (1975) presented the idea of "fear of success" (p. 529) of men who deviate from gender roles. They found that men do not have equal freedom to deviate from gender roles as compared to women. Goode (1960) identified that social structure determined the level of freedom to make decisions about role strain. These findings were not congruent with the reactions of surprise and

confusion by peers to male sorority advisors. The first male sorority advisor found a lack of understanding from his friends, and people outside the field of student affairs also lacked an understanding about his role as a sorority advisor.

...the perception with your friends...I always get the...'Oh that's got to be a really hard job. 'Yeah, man, that must be nice. What do you do? Teach them how to pillow fight?' And the other stereotypical bullshit that comes with that...Externally people are confused about what it is and what I do. They are confused about what I do anyway, whether it is a sorority or not.

Weinberg, Reveles, and Jackson (1984) found that women athletes do not perceive males differently as coaches compared to their perceptions of female coaches. Findings in the present study were similar for male sorority advisors, as they experienced members of the chapters to be very receptive and welcoming. The receptiveness of the sorority members is reflective of the influence men had on the founding of organizations such as Chi Omega who lists Dr. Charles Richardson as one of the five founders (Chi Omega Fraternity, 2007). The fourth male sorority advisor described the reactions of the sorority members to his involvement.

The chapter has been very warm and welcoming. It has been very positive; I don't think there has been any negative response at all. None that I certainly know of and none that has been expressed to me, either directly or indirectly...I think they were very appreciative because they knew initially I had no real vested interest in them as a group and was still willing to commit my time.

Kadushin (1976) concluded that theories about social roles and role strain contributed to the belief that men encountered problems in female professions. Male sorority advisors in the present study had similar role strain experiences but at the same time they did not. The male sorority advisors received both support and resistance from NPC leaders, headquarters staff members, and chapter advisors. The resistance and support came from all groups, so it is difficult to identify specifically why this occurred. Sullivan, Jelke, and Bureau (2002) identified a lack of NPC experience and knowledge of sororities as an obstacle for men advising women and that knowledge gap could be one of the reasons for the resistance. Goode (1960) found that the result of an individual's obligation to each role relationship is too overwhelming for one person and that "the individual cannot satisfy fully all demands" (p. 495). Hayes (1986) identified that a barrier for men in nontraditional occupations is that they face discrimination from society and co-workers. The seventh male sorority advisor identified the groups who exhibited resistance to his hire.

At first I think there was tremendous discomfort...people let me know in the beginning when I took the job that they wanted a woman for the job that had Panhellenic sorority experience and that wasn't only local chapter advisors. It was also some of the key student leaders on Panhellenic, and it was also different representatives from the National Panhellenic Conference.

The male sorority advisors stated that they maintained both a personal and physical distance from their sorority advisees. Sullivan, Jelke, and Bureau (2002) affirmed that knowing personal boundaries is an effective strategy for men advising women. Examining oneself is one exercise suggested by Shakeshaft, Nowell, and Perry

(1991) when they stated, "We need to acknowledge our backgrounds and training, understanding, that we had no control over what we were taught by society, school, and family" (p. 138). Shakeshaft, Nowell, and Perry believed that people have control of their actions and should use that control to address boundary issues. The second male sorority advisor described specific actions that he engaged in with sorority members.

I don't initiate a hug. Many of them will hug me, some of them don't. But I try not to initiate a hug unless it is someone that regularly will hug me and I know that it is okay. I try to keep a good personal space. I don't bring up topics like alcohol or relationships unless they have brought it up to me, and then once they have [broached] it to me and we have had conversations about it...I try to be careful.

The final outcome from the present study was that male sorority advisors reported learning the most about being a sorority advisor from reaching out and learning from other fraternity and sorority volunteers and professionals. The fifth male sorority advisor identified that his experience at a professional institute helped him overcome challenges.

I think the second thing that helped me was probably IFI. The Interfraternity Institute. I went after my first year, in my first professional job, and attended for a week in the summer in between my first and second year of my fulltime position at College D. And the exposure to not only other fairly new Greek advisors, but also national staff that happened to be there from fraternities and sororities gave me a lot of insight about how the NPC organizations run.

The male sorority advisors also found that sorority members were more likely than fraternity members to do a better job at thanking the participants for their

involvement and help. The first male sorority advisor recalled the appreciation he had received throughout his 15 years of advising experience.

They are so much more. They are so much better at thanking you than fraternities, and so much better about keeping you informed about stuff than fraternities that it is just a pleasure to work with them....There, are I would say, 10 to 12 women that I have advised in the past that I would consider people that I am in pretty constant touch with. I am talking about over a span of 15 years...It is great because you get to hear about, you know, they had kids and this and that. You get to stay with that whole. You get to relive how great they are and they thank you again. Then, they are like "You helped me so much" and this and that. It is like a much more well-rounded feeling having done some of that.

Hayes (1989) warned against using the findings of a single study as the theoretical basis for another study. This warning was due, in part, to the general need for more research on men in female dominated occupations. Lease (2003) reiterated that there was very little literature about men in female dominated occupations.

Future Researchers

The present study was not a comprehensive examination of the experiences of all male sorority advisors. It does not examine male sorority advising experiences and perspectives from the undergraduate sorority members, chapter advisors, alumnae, headquarters staff members, and NPC leaders who work with male sorority advisors. To assess the experiences of male sorority advisors more comprehensively, future researchers should:

- 1) Select male participants who represent a wide range of experience as a sorority advisor. This range would include number of years involved as an advisor, size of the chapter(s), geographic location of the school, and the cultural dynamics of the chapter(s) as well as the overall national sorority.
- 2) Include the experiences of undergraduate sorority members, chapter advisors, headquarter staff members, and NPC area advisors with male sorority advisors. This addition of female voices about their experience with male advisors would confirm or disconfirm the experiences of male sorority advisors and better identify some of the obstacles and challenges male advisors face in advising a woman's group.
- 3) Conduct a simultaneous longitudinal study of the experiences of a group of new male sorority advisors. Find participants who would be willing to proactively become a male sorority advisor. Have the study take place at different size institutions and in all geographic regions. A variety of NPC sororities and chapters with varying advisor needs should be selected. The participants should be of different ages, fraternity / sorority advising experience, and marital status.
- 4) Conduct an in-depth study of the characteristics and prior life experiences of men that lead them to become male sorority advisors.
- 5) Explore how dealing with body image issues amongst sorority members affects male sorority advisors.

- 6) Compare male sorority advisors of different sexual orientations to find out if and how their relationships with sorority members and acceptance from peers and colleagues differ.
- 7) Examine the backgrounds of the male sorority advisors to explore the reasons for the different levels of descriptiveness in their responses to the protocol questions.

Student Affairs Practitioners

The outcomes of the present study can help student affairs practitioners in their ability to understand and relate to the challenges and obstacles a male sorority advisor may face. Recommendations for student affairs practitioners are as follows.

- 1) Help facilitate the education of male sorority chapter advisors about NPC sororities and point them toward available resources.
- 2) Campus fraternity / sorority professionals should proactively contact NPC advisors and local chapter advisors and build relationships with them.
- 3) Help educate undergraduate sorority members about reaching out to men as sorority advisors and how to best transition them into the organization.
- 4) Be a mediator between male sorority advisors and NPC leaders, headquarters staff members, and other sorority advisors.
- 5) Be an advocate for men to become male sorority advisors.
- 6) Provide more education to male sorority advisors at professional development meetings and conferences.
- 7) Create an environment where policies and procedures reflect an inclusive Greek community that recognizes male sorority advisors.

Conclusions

The present study explored the experiences of male sorority advisors and why they became involved. Due to the unknown population of male sorority advisors, both men who advised Panhellenic councils and men who advised sororities in general and local chapters specifically were used as research participants for the present study. One-on-one interviews with the participants produced information that was interpreted by the researcher but could be viewed differently by another researcher. The naturalistic inquiry method (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001) was used to allow the participants to provide more thorough information about their experiences.

Common themes from the research questions were presented in chapter IV. Nine overall common themes were presented at the beginning of the present chapter. The researcher produced a few common themes that were consistent with the participants' and their experiences as a male sorority advisor. First, participants were very satisfied with their experience and enjoyed working with the sorority members and being a part of their lives. Some found their experiences to be more enjoyable than working with men. Second, the male sorority advisors faced obstacles or resistance from either another chapter advisor, alumnae member, headquarters staff member, or NPC advisor. Men who become male sorority advisors can expect some type of resistance from one of the four groups of sorority women. Third, the ability to communicate with the members was hampered due to differences in communication styles of men and women. This study was a very cathartic exercise for the researcher, allowing for the opportunity to make sense of his own experience as a male sorority advisor. The findings will help male sorority advisors make sense of their experiences, especially when there are few, if any,

similarly situated persons to reach out to with the same shared experience. The findings of the present study create a basic model for what to expect by any male who decides to become a male sorority advisor.

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Appendix A

Department Thesis Approval

Approval of Thesis Proposal

Name BRIAN T. CLARK

SS#/Banner ID _____

Title of Thesis

Role of MEN in WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS: MALE SORORITY ADVISORS

The thesis project is to be conducted in the manner described in the proposal with the following exception and/or conditions:

October 24, 2006
Date of Approval

J. Wallace
Chairperson, Thesis Committee

[Signature]
Member, Thesis Committee

[Signature]
Member, Thesis Committee

Appendix B
IRB Consent Form

November 14, 2006

Brian Clarke
Counseling and Student Development

Thank you for submitting the research protocol titled "Role of Men in Women's Organizations: Male Sorority Advisors" for review by the Eastern Illinois University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has Approved this research protocol following an Expedited Review procedure. IRB review has determined that the protocol involves no more than minimal risk to subjects and satisfies all of the criteria for approval of research.

This protocol has been given the IRB number 06-110. You may proceed with this study from 11/11/2006 to 11/10/2007. You must submit Form E, Continuation Request, to the IRB by 9/30/2007 if you wish to continue the project beyond the approval expiration date.

This approval is valid only for the research activities, timeline, and subjects described in the above named protocol. IRB policy requires that any changes to this protocol be reported to, and approved by, the IRB before being implemented. You are also required to inform the IRB immediately of any problems encountered that could adversely affect the health or welfare of the subjects in this study. Please contact me, or the Compliance Coordinator at 581-8576, in the event of an emergency. All correspondence should be sent to:

Institutional Review Board
c/o Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
Telephone: 581-8576
Fax: 217-581-7181
Email: eiurb@www.eiu.edu

Upon completion of your research project, please submit Form G, Completion of Research Activities, to the IRB, c/o the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs.

Thank you for your assistance, and the best of success with your research.

John Best, Chairperson
Institutional Review Board
Telephone: 581-6412
Email: jbbest@eiu.edu

Appendix C

Participation Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Role of Men in Women's Organizations: Male Sorority Advisors

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Brian T. Clarke and Dr. James A. Wallace from the Department of Counseling and Student Development at Eastern Illinois University. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether or not to participate. Generally, the investigator and potential participants read through and discuss the informed consent information together. Due to distance, I will be happy to discuss the informed consent statement via phone at my expense.

You have been asked to participate in this study because you have been identified as a person who has had experience advising traditionally white sororities.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study is to explore the phenomenon of men as sorority advisors. The research will provide a comprehensive analysis of the experiences of male sorority advisors including the reasons for their involvement and their unique experiences working with an all female organization.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to:

- (1) Answer several open-ended questions about your experience advising traditionally white sororities; and
- (2) Agree to the recording of the interview using a digital audio recorder.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You may be asked to describe personal experiences that are very sensitive and difficult to talk about. You may be the only person who knows about the experience.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

Participation in the study will help contribute to the current literature of men in nontraditional roles and female dominated occupations. Your participation will help in the development of a template for male sorority advisors. The template will address how to become a male sorority advisor, working with a sorority chapter, and overcoming the barriers associated with being a male in a female dominated position. The template may also serve to benefit future male sorority advisor and the alumnae members that work and volunteer as sorority advisors.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by the principle researcher who will have complete ownership of all information shared by the participants. Only pertinent findings of the research will be shared thesis committee members.

The researcher will be the only person who will have access to the audio files of the interview. All interviews will be transcribed and the original tapes will be destroyed after the approval of the master's thesis by the committee members.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this research study is voluntary and not a requirement or a condition for being the recipient of benefits or services from Eastern Illinois University or any other organization sponsoring the research project. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind or loss of benefits or services to which you are otherwise entitled.

You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer. There is no penalty if you withdraw from the study and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact:

Brian T. Clarke
Department of Counseling and Student Development
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Email: btclarke@eiu.edu
Phone: 626.329.1030

James A. Wallace, Ph.D.
Department of Counseling and Student Development
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Email: jawallace@eiu.edu
Phone: 217.581.7240

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

If you have any questions or concerns about the treatment of human participants in this study, you may call or write:

Institutional Review Board
Eastern Illinois University
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920
Telephone: (217) 581-8576
E-mail: eiuirb@www.eiu.edu

You will be given the opportunity to discuss any questions about your rights as a research subject with a member of the IRB. The IRB is an independent committee composed of members of the University community, as well as lay members of the community not connected with EIU. The IRB has reviewed and approved this study.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time. I have been given a copy of this form.

Printed Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Appendix D

Interview Protocol Questions

Interview Protocols

Nontraditional Career Choice

- (1) What has been your prior experience in advising Greek letter organizations?
- (2) What specific experiences influenced your decision to become a sorority advisor?
- (3) How were you selected/appointed/hired to advise a sorority?
- (4) Describe the training and any support you received from a national office or regional volunteer team when you became a sorority advisor.

Sex Role Identity

- (5) Describe the challenges, obstacles, and barriers you have had to overcome as an advisor.
- (6) Describe the level of self satisfaction you received from advising a sorority.
- (7) Describe the different relationships you have with the members of the sorority.
- (8) Describe any experiences where you felt uncomfortable working with the sorority.

Stereotypes

- (9) What perceptions or stereotypes do your colleagues/peers have about your involvement as a male sorority advisor?
- (10) How receptive were the members of the (1) chapter, (2) alumnae, (3) other sorority advisors, and (4) headquarters staff members of the organization to your involvement with the sorority?

Appendix E
Demographic Survey

Sorority Advisory Demographic Information Survey

Age _____

Ethnic group or Nationality:

- ☐ Multiracial
☐ African American
☐ Native American
☐ Asian American
☐ Latino/Spanish-Hispanic
☐ White American
☐ Non-U.S. Citizen/Permanent Resident

Involvement

☐ Chapter Advisor ☐ Greek Life Professional ☐ Graduate Assistant

Title of Position: _____

Responsibilities: _____

How many years have you been involved? _____

What year did you become involved? _____

What year did you end your involvement? _____

Do you have prior experience working with women's organizations?
(Yes / No) _____ Years

List experience: _____

Education

☐ HS diploma/GED ☐ Some College ☐ Associates
☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Doctoral

Current Profession

Current job: _____

Duties: _____

Appendix F

Letter of Introduction

October 10, 2006

RE: Participation in the research of male sorority advisors

Dear Participant,

I am a second year graduate student in the College Student Affairs master's degree program at Eastern Illinois University. Currently, I am in the process of collecting data for my thesis titled "Male Sorority Advisors". My goal is to conduct and assess of the experiences of males who volunteer to serve as advisors to sororities; with special interest in their experiences, reasons for decisions to serve as advisors to a sorority, and their self perceptions of their roles and effectiveness.

You were identified as a potential participant for the study because you are a person who has had experience advising traditionally white sororities. Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. If you agree to participate your involvement in the study will include an interview about your experience advising traditionally white sororities and a demographic survey. The interview will last approximately 45 minutes and will be completely confidential. The interview will be over the phone or in person if feasible.

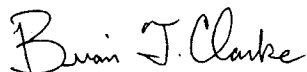
Your participation is critical to the success of the study. As a person who has served as a male sorority advisor, I want to provide future resources about the difficulties of being a male sorority advisors and how organizations can address those issues.

If you choose to participant in the study, email me at btclarke@eiu.edu to confirm your consent to participate. When your email is received, a one page demographic survey and a letter of informed consent will be emailed to you. When those documents are received, a time will be established to conduct an interview with you.

If you have any questions about the study and your participation, you can contact me by phone at 626.329.1030 or by email at btclarke@eiu.edu.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Brian T. Clarke
Candidate for Master of Science, College Student Affairs
Eastern Illinois University

Appendix G

National Panhellenic Council Letter

October 1, 2006

Ms. Suzette Mathis
Executive Director
Alpha Chi Omega Sorority
5939 Castle Creek Pkwy N. Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46250-4343

Dear Ms. Mathis:

I am a second year graduate student in the College Student Affairs master's degree program at Eastern Illinois University. Currently, I am in the process of collecting data for my thesis titled "Male Sorority Advisors". My goal is to conduct an assessment of the experiences of males who volunteer to serve as advisors to individual sorority chapters; with special interest in their experiences, reasons for decisions to serve as advisors to a sorority, and their self perceptions of their roles and effectiveness. To accomplish this task, I am reaching out to the headquarters of the member organizations of the National Panhellenic Conference. Specifically, I am asking for your help in collecting the following information for my thesis:

- (1) the number of active undergraduate chapters;
- (2) the number of male chapter advisors; and
- (3) the number of male volunteers at any local, regional or national level.

If you have male sorority chapter advisors, I am asking that you provide their names and contact information. The male sorority advisors so identified will be given an opportunity to volunteer as potential participants for my thesis research.

As a member and former traveling consultant for Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity, I understand how important it is to understand the needs, rights and responsibilities of volunteers. My hope is that my research will provide a better understanding of the male sorority advisor experience. I ask that you please give strong consideration to this request. Information can be sent to me by email at btclarke@eiu.edu or by U.S. mail to: 1306 Arthur Ave. #2, Charleston, IL 61920.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 626.329.1030 or my thesis committee chair, Dr. James Wallace, at 217.581.7240. You may also contact the Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Dr. Robert Chesnut, at 217.581.8453.

Sincerely,

Brian T. Clarke
Graduate Student
Eastern Illinois University
Department of Counseling and Student Development
2112 Buzzard Hall
Charleston, IL 61920

Appendix H

Association of Fraternity Advisors Letter

October 1, 2006

Ms. Sue Kraft Fussell
Association of Fraternity Advisors
9640 N. Augusta Drive, Suite 433
Carmel, IN 46032

Dear Ms. Kraft Fussell:

I am a second year graduate student in the College Student Affairs master's degree program at Eastern Illinois University. Currently, I am in the process of collecting data for my thesis titled "Male Sorority Advisors". My goal is to conduct an assessment of the experiences of males who volunteer to serve as advisors to sororities; with special interest in their experiences, reasons for decisions to serve as advisors to a sorority, and their self perceptions of their roles and effectiveness. To accomplish this task, I am reaching out to the executive office of the Association of Fraternity Advisors. Specifically, I am asking for your help in collecting the following information for my thesis:

- (1) the number of male graduate members who are employed by a Greek Life Office; and
- (2) the number of male professional members who are employed by and have responsibilities for Greek Life.

For the members that fit this into this category, I am asking that you provide me their names and contact information, including email and mailing address in an excel file. The male members so identified will be given an opportunity to volunteer as potential participants for my thesis research.

As a member and former traveling consultant for Sigma Phi Epsilon fraternity, I understand how important it is to understand the needs, rights and responsibilities of Greek Life professionals. My hope is that my research will provide a better understanding of the male sorority advisor experience. I ask that you please give strong consideration to this request. Information can be sent to me by email at btclarke@eiu.edu or by U.S. mail to: 1306 Arthur Ave. #2, Charleston, IL 61920.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 626.329.1030 or my thesis committee chair, Dr. James Wallace, at 217.581.7240. You may also contact the Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Dr. Robert Chesnut, at 217.581.8453.

Sincerely,

Brian T. Clarke
Graduate Student
Eastern Illinois University
Department of Counseling and Student Development
2112 Buzzard Hall
Charleston, IL 61920
JC: Hard Copy

Appendix I

Association of Fraternity Advisors Online Community Posting

Members of the Association of Fraternity Advisors,

I am a second year graduate student in the College Student Affairs master's degree program at Eastern Illinois University. Currently, I am in the process of collecting data for my thesis titled "Male Sorority Advisors". My goal is to conduct an assessment of the experiences of males who volunteer to serve as advisors to sororities; with special interest in their experiences, reasons for decisions to serve as advisors to a sorority, and their self perceptions of their roles and effectiveness.

I am currently looking for potential candidates to participate in my study who meet the following criteria:

(1) Male

(2) Previously or currently serve as an advisor to a National Panhellenic Council sorority in the capacity as a:

- chapter advisor;
- academic advisor; or
- Director of Greek Life whose duties include serving as advisor to the Panhellenic Council.

If you know of anyone that meets these criteria, I ask that you please forward their name and contact information to btclarke@eiu.edu. The male members so identified will be given an opportunity to volunteer as potential participants for my thesis research.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 626.329.1030 or my thesis committee chair, Dr. James Wallace, at 217.581.7240. You may also contact the Director of the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, Dr. Robert Chesnut, at 217.581.8453.

Thank you,

Brian T. Clarke
Eastern Illinois University
Graduate Student
Department of Counseling and Student Development
600 Lincoln Ave.
Charleston, IL 61920

JC: Hard Copy

Brian T. Clarke

1306 Arthur Ave. #2, Charleston, IL 61920

EDUCATION

Master of Science, College Student Affairs
Eastern Illinois University
Distinguished Graduate Student Award Recipient

August 2007

Bachelor of Science, Communications
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

June 2003

RELATED EXPERIENCE

Regional Director, Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity
Richmond, Virginia

June 2003 – April 2005

- Created and facilitated strategies for improvement, managed, and provided support to chapter officers and alumni volunteers for 26 chapters.
- Planned, organized, and facilitated retreats and workshops on goal setting and recruitment.
- Consulted on issues and assisted in the development and implementation of action plans and financial payment plans.

Graduate Intern, Cliff Alexander Office of Fraternity and Sorority Life and Leadership
Miami University, Oxford, OH

May 2006 – July 2006

- Organized 900 volunteers from 50 chapters for the move in of freshman students.
- Designed and produced Greek life parent's brochures and values based posters.
- Represented the office at orientation sessions and presented a workshop at reunion weekend.

Graduate Assistant, Department of Counseling and Student Development
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL

August 2005 – May 2007

- Coordinated the recruitment of graduate students for the College Student Affairs program.
- Planned a 10 day tour of 18 Historically Black Colleges and Universities for seven students.
- Organized, improved, and implemented College Student Affairs interview days for admission to graduate program and graduate assistantships.

Graduate Intern, Academic Advising Center
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL

August 2006 – December 2006

- Academically advised students registering for the spring 2007 semester.
- Attended meetings with faculty members from academic departments.

INVOLVEMENT

Faculty Advisor, Alpha Phi Women's Fraternity August 2005 – September 2006
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL

- Attended weekly executive committee and chapter meetings of 110 members.
- Worked with officers to revise risk management policies and create an annual budget.

Board Member, University Judicial Board October 2005 – May 2007
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL

- Attended judicial hearings and deliberated with board members to make rulings.

Facilitator, Undergraduate Interfraternity Institute 2004 – 2006
North American Interfraternity Conference

- Small group facilitator

President, College Student Personnel Association August 2005 – May 2007
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL

- Assisted in the planning of professional development events for over 30 master's students.
- Organized and convened monthly general and executive committee meetings.

President, Vice President, Graduate Student Advisory Council Aug. 2005 – May 2007
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL

- Collaborated with the graduate school to address graduate student issues.
- Organized and ran monthly general and executive committee meetings.

Facilitator, Milliken University Emerging Greek Leaders Retreat October 2005

- Facilitated large group presentations and small group discussions.

Co-Chair, Student Affairs 101 September 2005 – January 2006
Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL

- Organized a one day drive in conference about a career in student affairs for 100 undergraduate students.
- Recruited students affairs graduate programs to participate in the conference.

MEMBERSHIPS

Association of Fraternity Advisors, **2005 – Present**

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, **2005 – Present**

American College Personnel Association, **2005 – Present**

Sigma Phi Epsilon, **1998 – Present**

Cal Poly Pomona Alumni Association, **2005 – Present**

PRESENTATIONS

Eberly, C. G., Wall, A. F., Clarke, B. T., & Shaw, W. B. (2006, March 14). *Faculty Influence in Residential Learning Communities Accredited by a National Fraternity*. NASPA Annual Conference, Washington, DC.

Clarke, B. T. (2005, October 23). *Etiquette for Professionals in Student Affairs*. Midwest Meeting of Graduate Students in Student Personnel, Schaumburg, IL.

CONFERENCES

Association of Fraternity Advisors Annual Meeting, **December 2004 - 2006**
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Annual Conference, **2006**